

THE WAR.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN? WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

(Abstract of an address by Dr. C. V. Roman in Meharry Auditorium, December 2, 1917.)

We may very properly call the American Civil War a postscript to the Declaration of Independence. They left the Negro out of the Declaration of '76 and it took the Civil War to put him into it; that is, to give the Negro citizenship in the land he had helped to free. I was born while this postscript to the Declaration of Independence was being written.

The supplement to the history of Europe in Asia and Africa is now being written in Europe. God moves in a mysterious way and Nature can afford to take her time. His purposes are immutable and His processes are unerring. Verily God is not mocked and nations as well as individuals shall reap as they sow. The blood of the Congo has not permanently enriched Belgium, nor has Britain been able to hold the wealth wrung from the oppressed natives.

"Where Africa's sunny fountains,
Roll down their golden sands.

France and Italy are also collecting African interest. The Turks' retribution is gathering momentum and the Kaiser will understand it better by-and-by. They are all guilty, and they are all suffering. "Shall the persecution of the Jew go unpunished?" asked Romania and Russia.

What a person sees depends upon several things. There is no real light, nor beauty, nor proportion, nor harmony, nor concord, except in man's consciousness.

"Tis the mind alone that sees and hears,
All other things are deaf and blind."

Physical vision is of little importance except as the servant of mental vision. What a man sees will depend upon his spiritual and mental state. Our spiritual state as well as our mental and physical condition influences our vision and colors what we see. Our loves, our hates, our hopes, our fears, our ambitions, our triumphs, our defeats, all enter into our interpretation of life's panorama. A man's vision is the triplicate product of his physical condition, his mental bent and his spiritual aspirations.

5.—WHAT A MAN SEES DEPENDS UPON HIS POSITION AND HIS OPPORTUNITIES. A man in a well is not likely to present wide views of astronomy, and a slave's idea of liberty may be freedom from the lash. A Georgia cracker may see the destruction of white supremacy in the wake of a Negro driving an auto, and a dog's idea of the millennium may be a shower of bones.

3.—WHAT A MAN SEES MAY DEPEND UPON HIS INTERESTS. Self-interest outweighs justice. Therefore in seeking the meanings of passing events we should do two things:

(a)—Concentrate and co-ordinate our best physical, mental and spiritual powers;

(b)—View them from as many angles as possible.

It is our privilege to be living in one of the great crises of the world's history and to be factors in the fate of man. How to meet this momentous occasion is a question for every individual, race and nationality to answer. The decision is urgently necessary, and cannot be evaded.

successfully, nor postponed indefinitely. Evasion is treachery and postponement is cowardice.

For the last few centuries the world has been moving on the presumption that the white race was humanity, and Europe was the world, might and right, and the earth belonged to him who could take it. In the year of Grace 1914 Europe suddenly found this doctrine a guiding principle in home affairs. Belgium was despoiled for the same reason and on the same principle that Congo was despoiled, somebody else wanted what she had and was able to take it. But Belgium's fate was only an incident to giving France the same medicine which she gave Morocco—Belgium and France, just as Morocco and Congo offered all the resistance possible.

For purely selfish, if perfectly righteous reasons, Great Britain joined France and Belgium and the great European war was on. For similar reasons one after the other of the nations of the earth have come into the conflict, our own nation in the number. WHAT DOES IT MEAN? WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

To find an answer let us view this war from four different angles or viewpoints:

1.—WORLD-WIDE VIEW.

2.—NATIONAL VIEW.

3.—RACIAL VIEW.

4.—PERSONAL VIEW.

To the world this war means a re-adjustment of standards. It means the spread of civilization or the destruction of civilization. Liberty is for all or for none. Europe cannot remain a den of thieves and the home of civilization and peace.

Neither a man nor a nation can change principles with habit and character with companions. One cannot be a thief and murderer in Africa and Asia and be a gentleman in Europe. This was but the supplement to the history of Europe in Asia and Africa. No man's freedom is safe while any man's freedom is in danger. This same is true of nations. Belgium's freedom is no more sacred than Congo's. Admit the principle of robbery and everybody is in danger. NATIONALLY, we were no safer than Belgium. Advocate the doctrine of right and difference of nationality does not mean difference of fate for Louvain and Lusitania. Neutrality would not save us when we would not help it save Belgium. As far as this nation is concerned, this war is a war of self-defense. We must either vindicate our rights as a nation or abdicate them.

Racially, this war spells for us the most glorious word in the vocabulary of freedom—OPPORTUNITY. It means the reopening of a case that was thought to have been finally decided against us. John J. Ingalls when he said, "Destruction is Nature's final decree in equity for the black man." Race prejudice in this country has sought to fit the warp of disease into the woof of civic oppression so that time shall weave the winding sheet of the Negro Race. This war question is the finality of the decree. The editor of the New Republic says sentimentally, "Conscription of the Negro brings the South face to face with the necessity of overhauling its scheme of racial relationships."

Energy emphasizes individuality. What it means to the individual depends upon that individual.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

1.—First of all, don't talk too much. Too much talk is the bane of effective action. The race situation

has been much complicated by unnecessary talk.

2.—THINK—Think with your eyes open and your ears open and your MOUTH SHUT. The Japanese motto is fine for this occasion: "See nothing, hear nothing, say nothing."

3.—Be careful how you do what your enemy wants you to do. Pleasing your enemy is hazardous business.

4.—Be careful how you offend, disappoint or desert your friends.

5.—In claiming privileges be sure you are ready for the connoted duties and responsibilities.

6.—Lastly, let us do our part and expect our share.



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Ethnological.
An Irishman, taking home for dinner a large duck, stopped at a store to make further purchases. Having put down the duck he was talking to the clerk when a seedy looking individual seized the bird and made off with it. Pat immediately gave chase and before long, had him by the arm.

"What did yez take the bird for?" asked Pat.

"Oh," said the seedy one, "I just took it for a lark."

"Did yez?" said Pat. "Then yez'd make a poor judge at a bird show."

I say the word—
It is no sin
A Kaiser below
Is worth two in Berlin.

Little Ones Write to Santa Claus.

821 Verona Avenue,
Lewisburg, Tenn., Dec. 10, 1917.

Dear Santa Claus:
I am a little boy 13 years old. Santa, I want you to bring me a boy scout suit, apples, candy and oranges. I do not want much this Christmas. Bring mother a papa, something nice. Do not forget my sisters and my brothers and also my big brother in New York City. Bring my teacher something nice. Bring Master Stacy McMillan in Fayetteville, Tenn., something nice. I will close. Your little boy,
MILDRED H. DAVIS.

Dear Santa Claus:
I am a good little girl and live on 12th Avenue, North. I love my mamma and papa would like for you to bring me many things for Christmas. Your little girl,
DOROTHY WASHINGTON.

Dear Santa Claus:
I am a little girl 11 years old. I go to school and endeavor to be smart. Kindly remember me this Christmas during your visits.
GRACE L. PRICE.

Dear Santa Claus:
I am a little girl 8 years old and go to school each week day and to Sunday school on Sunday. Please bring me some presents for Christmas. Your little girl,
MILDRED K. PRICE.

Dear Santa Claus:
I am a little girl 2 years old and stay with mamma all the time. I would like to be remembered by you this Christmas. Good bye.
ALBERTA E. PRICE.

Verona Avenue, Lewisburg, Tenn.
Dec. 10, 1917.

Dear Santa Claus:
Since Christmas is drawing near I thought I would write you a few lines and hope they will find you well also. I am a little boy 9 years old and am in the 3rd A grade. I want you to bring me a run, a suit of clothes, a pair of shoes and a bugle. Bring my teacher something nice. Do not forget my mother who is in Kentucky, also my father. Bring me apples, oranges, candy and cream nuts. Do not forget my little playmates, Mildred H. Davis and Paul Davis, also don't forget my brother, Herman Orr. Don't forget Mrs. Atkins and also Mrs. Mitchell and all kinds of fruit. Do not forget my brother and sister. I don't want much this Christmas, so I will close. From
ROYAL THURSTON ORR.

821 Verona Avenue,
Lewisburg, Tenn., Dec. 10, 1917.

Dear Santa Claus:
I am a little boy nine years old. I help mother bring in the wood and coal. I think I would like to hunt a little, so you can bring me a gun, one that will shoot. Bring me some apples, oranges and candy and all kinds of fruit. Do not forget my sisters and brothers. Don't forget my teacher, Mr. Marsh. Bring my playmates, Herman and Thurston Orr, something nice. Don't forget my big brother in New York. I will close. Your little boy,
PAUL H. DAVIS.

P. S.—Don't forget my cousin, Mrs. Claude Smith, in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Orlinda, Tenn., Dec. 10, 1917.

Dear Santa Claus:
My mother is dead. I live with my father and grandmother. I go to school every day. I haven't missed a day. I want you to bring me all kinds of fruit, bring me all kinds of candies and a sleeping doll and some toys, and remember my brothers, candies, apples, oranges, bananas and raisins. I close. From a little girl,
SARAH DOWNING, Orlinda, Tenn.

912 Eleventh Ave., N.,
Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 10, 1917.

Dear Santa Claus:
I am a little boy 10 years old. Please come to see me Christmas. I want you to bring me a train, some clothes, fireworks and story book. I am your little boy,
LA VENTRESS O. FERGUSON.

912 Eleventh Ave., N.,
Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 10, 1917.

Dear Santa Claus:
I am a little girl 4 years old. It is almost Christmas and I am looking for you. Please bring me a doll, a doll chair and some dresses and ribbon. I do not expect much these hard times. Remember mother, father and do not forget the soldiers. I am your little girl,
ELIENE V. FERGUSON.

1509 Pearl Street,
Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 9, 1917.

Dear Santa Claus:
I am a little girl 11 years old and please bring me a pair of shoes and some dresses, ribbon and some stockings and a doll 12 inches high and nuts, oranges, apples and candy. Please remember mother, papa, sister and brother Elliott. Bring them anything you think would be nice for them. I will close. From your little girl,
LUCY M. PIERCE.

Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 11, 1917.

Dear Santa Claus:
I am a little boy 7 years old. I have been a right good boy and I want you to bring me a little boat that winds and a little walking man, plenty of nuts, candy and fruit. Your little boy,
BERNARD STEWART BOSTIC,
134 14th Ave., N.

Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 11, 1917.

Dear Santa Claus:
I am a little girl 2 years old. I have been a very good little girl this year and I want you to bring me a doll, a little scarlet yellow and white rubber ball and a jumping jack. Well, Santa, I guess this is all for this time. Please remember mother and father, Aunt Clara and all the family. Bring them something nice. Your little girl,
MAYME CLAIR BOSTIC,
134 14th Ave., N.

P. S.—Please bring me plenty of fruits, nuts and candy.

Nashville, Tenn., Dec. 11, 1917.

Dear Santa Claus:
I am too large now to play with toys, but you may bring me a lock and chain, a box of chocolate candy and anything else you should wish

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